

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 AF-10 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 NIC-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 4895

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UNGA, RQ

SUBJ: PUERTO RICO IN UNGA

REF: USUN 4852

1. US DELEGATE (AMB. SHITE), SPEAKING IN UNGA FOURTH (DECOLONIZATION) COMMITTEE NOV. 16 ON FOREIGN ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN COLONIAL TERRITORIES, MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS IN RESPONSE TO CUBAN DELEGATE'S NOV. 14 STATEMENT TO COMMITTEE THAT PROPOSED PUERTO RICAN SUPERPORT WAS EXAMPLE OF US COLONIAL EXPLOITATION OF TERRITORY.

"MR. CHAIRMAN, I SHOULD LIKE TO CONCLUDE WITH A COMMENT ON THE STATEMENT MADE BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE ON NOVEMBER 14, BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA. MR. CHAIRMAN, THE QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO IS NOT BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LONG AGO DETERMINED, BY ENACTING RESOLUTION 748 IN ITS EIGHTH SESSION, THAT 'THE DECLARATION REGARDING NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES AND THE PROVISIONS ESTABLISHED UNDER IT IN CHAPTER XI OF THE CHARTER CAN NO LONGER BE APPLIED TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO.'

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"THE 26TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DRAMATICALLY

REAFFIRMED THIS DECISION IN 1971, WHEN IT WISELY REFUSED TO INSCRIBE AN ITEM ON PUERTO RICO BY AN OVERWHELMING VOTE OF 57 AGAINST INSCRIPTION TO 26 IN FAVOR.

"WE CANNOT IN THIS COMMITTEE MAKE A MOCKERY OF PLENARY DECISIONS. IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT PUERTO RICO IS NOT A PROPER SUBJECT OF CONCERN AND THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE INSCRIBED ON THE AGENDA. IF WE ARE TO IGNORE THESE DECISIONS AND THE ABSENCE OF EVEN SO MUCH AS A REQUEST FOR AN ITEM THIS YEAR, WE MAKE A SHAM NOT ONLY OF PAST DECISIONS BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BUT ALSO OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE. WE MIGHT AS WELL ABOLISH THE GENERAL COMMITTEE AND SIT IN ONE LONG PLENARY, EACH OF US TALKING ABOUT WHATEVER COMES TO MIND. SUCH A PROCEDURE WOULD, OF COURSE, DESTROY THE UNITED NATIONS, BUT PERHAPS THAT IS WHAT ONE DELEGATION WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN. WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN EVIDENCE OF THEIR SENSE OF DECORUM IN THE PLENARY, AS WELL AS IN THIS COMMITTEE."

2. CUBAN DELEGATE, EXERCISING RIGHT OF REPLY, MADE RELATIVELY MILD STATEMENT REPEATING CHARGE THAT PUERTO RICO IS COLONIAL TERRITORY.

3. TOWARD VERY END OF MEETING, FOURTH COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, VENEZUELAN DEPUTY PERM REP DIAZ GONZALEZ (POSSIBLY MIS-INTERPRETING US STATEMENT AS SOMEHOW CRITICAL OF HIS HANDLING OF COMMITTEE) MADE STRONG EMOTIONAL STATEMENT THAT US REP HAD MADE MOCKERY OF RULES OF PROCEDURE. DIAZ GONZALEZ DECLARED ALL COLONIAL TERRITORIES, REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY ARE LOCATED, SUBJECT TO UNGA RES 1514 AND COULD THEREFORE BE DISCUSSED IN COMMITTEE. DIAZ GONZALEZ CITED OPERATIVE PARAS OF COMMITTEE OF 24'S AUGUST 30, 1973 RES ON PUERTO RICO, PARTICULARLY REFERENCE TO PUERTO RICO'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE, AS SPECIFIC JUSTIFICATION FOR UN FOURTH COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF PUERTO RICO. HE REQUESTED THAT COMMITTEE RECORD REFLECT IN EXTENSO HIS VIEW THAT FOURTH COMMITTEE SHOULD CONTINUE TO CONSIDER ALL TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION, INCLUDING PUERTO RICO.

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4. JUST BEFORE CHAIRMAN ADJOURNED MEETING, US DELEGATE TOOK EXCEPTION TO CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT AND RESERVED RIGHT OF US TO REAFFIRM ITS INTERPRETATION AT LATER SESSION.

5. SINCE VENEZUELAN FONMIN CALVANI EXPECTED IN SAN JUAN NOV. 17, WE CONVEYED SUBSTANCE OF ABOVE TO GOV. HERNANDEZ COLON'S SPECIAL COUNSEL CABRANESE IN WASHINGTON EVENING

NOV. 16. CABRANES UNABLE REACH GOVERNOR OVER WEEK-END.

6. COMMENT; AMB BENNETT ATTEMPTING TO SCHEDULE MEETING WITH DIAZ GONZALEZ TODAY IN ORDER TO CONVEY OUR CONCERN OVER IMPLICATIONS OF LATTER'S RULING AND EXPRESSION OF VIEWS. AMB BENNETT WILL EMPHASIZE THAT COMMITTEE OF 24 HAS NOT REPEAT NOT RECOMMENDED THAT PUERTO RICO BE RETURNED TO LIST OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES AND THAT, THEREFORE, UNGA RES 748, REMOVING PUERTO RICO FROM THE LIST IN 1953, IS STILL OPERATIVE. AMB BENNETT WILL ALSO QUESTION VALIDITY OF CHAIRMAN'S GRATUITOUS STATEMENT THAT PUERTO RICO IS STILL UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION, AND WILL EMPHASIZE THAT UNGA, AS RECENTLY AS 1971, TURNED DOWN CUBAN PROPOSAL THAT SO-CALLED COLONIAL CASE OF PUERTO RICO BE PLACED ON AGENDA.

7. WE RECOGNIZE THAT DIAZ GONZALEZ ACTED IN CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN FOURTH COMMITTEE RATHER THAN AS VENEZUELAN DELEGATE. NEVERTHELESS, WE SUGGEST THAT EMBASSY CARACAS, IF IT DEEMS IT ADVISABLE, INFORM FONMIN OF OUR CONCERN OVER DIAZ GONZALEZ' RULING WHICH, IN EFFECT, GIVES CUBANS GREEN LIGHT TO RAISE PUERTO RICO IN ANY UN BODY, AND ADVISE FONMIN OF ACTION CONTEMPLATED BY USUN.
BENNETT

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